

Polls are used to consider timetables for possible negotiations, as each side ponders its moment of maximum advantage. Television spots about Medicare have employed slogans only minimally more civil than "liar, liar, pants on fire!"—which, of course, is their underlying message.

And focus groups scripted the debate that preceded the House's vote Thursday to curb \$270 billion in spending for Medicare and make wrenching changes in the centerpiece of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society. Democrats may not have needed any research before accusing the Republicans of slighting the elderly to help the rich; that may be not be thoughtful, but it is instinctive. But when Republicans said "preserve and protect," over and over, they were following their pollsters' advice, not engaging in a serious discussion.

Even the most ordinary tasks of Congress are subordinated to political tactics. Only three of the 13 spending bills that Congress had promised to complete before the fiscal year began three weeks ago have gone to the White House. Some of those bills have real problems, and may be hard for even Republicans to agree on.

But a few days ago Speaker Newt Gingrich explained the delay in purely tactical terms. He said he thought President Clinton would try to make headlines by vetoing them, and snapped, "I'm not going to give his Presidential campaign new cheap-shot photocopies." (In past Congresses, the dynamics were only a little different: Democrats invited vetoes by passing bills they knew Presidents Reagan and Bush would reject, seeking campaign issues for the next election.)

ARRANGING SURRENDER

One reason that major legislation and national issues are being approached with the winner-take-all-quality of elections is that the normal process of getting things done in Washington, compromise, has become synonymous with capitulation. If compromise is evil, then who needs negotiations? All that's needed to arrange are the terms of surrender.

Kathleen Hall Jamieson, dean of the Annenberg School of Communications at the University of Pennsylvania and an expert on political language, suggests the problem is more than rhetorical. "The thing that the word 'compromise' was designed to describe—the process by which you forge consensus—is no longer an acceptable part of the political process," she said. That was especially true in the House, she said, where "institutional courtesies" like consideration for the minority and civility in debate have fallen into disuse.

Republicans, driven by a huge and unbending freshman class, offer no apologies. Representative David M. McIntosh, an Indiana freshman, explained last week: "When we went home in August, we all heard from the public, 'Don't back down, don't give in to the Senate or the President.' We came back and we told the leadership that we won't back down, and we haven't."

Mr. Gingrich knew what was coming, for right after the election last year he proclaimed himself "very prepared to cooperate with the Clinton Administration," but "not prepared to compromise." And even Senator Bob Dole, the majority leader, who has built a considerable legislative reputation on making deals, said last month, "This will not be an autumn of compromise, make no mistake about it."

Mr. Clinton does not always spurn compromise. But he has not given it a good name, either. Last week he even seemed to be trying to cut a deal with himself on the subject of taxes, first sounding contrite that he had raised taxes "too much" in 1993 and then pronouncing himself proud of that

year's budget. But he has been attacking many of the Republicans' spending cuts as "extremist," so he risks being accused of surrender if he reaches an agreement with them on next year's budget.

FEATS OF CLAY

House Democrats will oppose almost any deal that involves spending cuts; they don't believe in them. But Mr. Clinton also fears attacks from the press, which cannot believe that Mr. Clinton can give ground to help the country, but only because he is wishy-washy.

Compromise was once highly prized in American politics, at the Constitutional Convention, in the Republic's early days, and when Henry Clay, the dominant lawmaker of the first half of the 19th century, was hailed as the "Great Compromiser."

But in the years leading up to the Civil War, compromise lost its good name. Abolitionists held slavery to be a moral abomination, and Abraham Lincoln himself rejected a pre-inaugural effort to preserve the Union by guaranteeing slavery forever in the states where it then existed.

Joel Silbey, a Cornell University historian, noted that compromise again fell into disrepute just before the Progressive Era, when "government seemed to be forever compromising with evil power." Like the Civil War period, and like today, he said, that was a time when outsiders got involved in the political process and scorned its traditions.

An important House Republican leadership aide said the same circumstances prevailed today: "The American people think that politicians, once they get to Washington, are all too willing to give up their principles, wedded to a system of selling out."

Today's politicians find a lot of moral imperatives, like the difference between achieving a balanced budget in 2002 and, say, 2003. Not Mr. Clinton, who has said at various times that it would take five years, seven years, eight years or nine. But seven years is what the Republicans say they must have—or else.

There are Democrats who speak of cuts in Medicare in the apocalyptic terms they would use if faced with a bill completely repealing this greatest of the Great Society's programs. And there are Republicans, like Mr. McIntosh, who look in absolute terms on a pet project of his and Representative Ernest Istook's—an effort to prohibit groups that get any Federal money from lobbying the Federal Government, ever. They threaten to hold all other legislation hostage until they get that prohibition adopted.

Norman Ornstein, the Congressional scholar from the American Enterprise Institute, says there may be 100 House Republicans "who believe, deep down, that compromise is a bad thing." He said the leaders were giving themselves very little breathing room by leaving only three weeks to get major bills passed and then settle things before the debt limit expires Nov. 12. "It's a dangerous end game," he warns.

Earlier this month, it seemed both sides might negotiate. But the Clinton side thought the Congressional quest for Medicare cuts was hurting the Republicans and saw no reason to give ground. It may be only when both sides think the public will blame them for stubbornness that they may sit down together.

If so, politicians may be too busy testing attack phrases—like "tax cut for your wealthy contributors," or "a joke wrapped in fraud and shrouded by farce"—to judge the public clearly.

Peter D. Hart, a Washington pollster, said a recent poll conducted for NBC News and The Wall Street Journal showed that a majority of Democrats wanted the President "to make adjustments to reach compromise"

with Congressional Republicans on budget issues and that a majority of Republicans wanted their lawmakers to compromise with Mr. Clinton.

"Compromise may be a dirty word in Washington," he said. "But out among the public it is a very positive term." •

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia is informed that, under the circumstances, morning business would have been closed. Does he ask consent to continue that for a time in excess of 5 minutes?

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that I may speak out of order for such time as I may consume.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE BUDGET RECONCILIATION PROCESS

Mr. BYRD. Mr. President, last Friday, in the early hours following midnight, the Senate passed S. 1357, the Budget Reconciliation Act of 1995. Here it is; it is 1,949 pages. The passage of that bill was not one of the Senate's finest hours. It was the latest, and perhaps the most striking, example to date of the misuse of the Budget Act's reconciliation process to ram through the Senate a 1,949-page monstrosity—there it is—a gigantic monstrosity, which will permanently change a vast number of statutes in ways that no Senator can possibly understand.

The fast-track reconciliation procedures that were established in the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 were never intended to be used as a method to enact omnibus legislative changes under expedited, non-filibusterable procedures. I know, because I helped to write the Congressional Budget Act in 1974, and it was never in my contemplation that the reconciliation legislation would be used in this fashion and for these purposes—never! I would not have supported it; I would have voted against it.

As a matter of fact, I would have left some loopholes in that legislation, which would have saved us, and which would continue to save us from stultifying ourselves by using such procedures to pass legislation which otherwise would be debated at great length, amended many times, and assure the American people that their representatives here knew what they were doing when they passed the legislation. So it was never intended to be used in that fashion. Yet, that is what has occurred under the reconciliation process.

Beginning in 1981, the Senate Budget Committee has piled together whatever changes the authorizing committees have recommended, and that is in accordance with the law. The Budget Committee has to do that. It has no alternative. It has no recourse. It cannot amend, substantively, measures that come to it from the authorizing committees. And the Budget Committee then must present this package to the Senate in the form of a reconciliation bill, often with little regard as to

whether there was any deficit reduction purpose for such provisions, as was intended by the 1974 Budget Act.

The temptation to get such extraneous provisions into reconciliation acts is almost irresistible because of the fact that reconciliation bills, as I say, cannot be filibustered, opportunities to amend reconciliation bills are extremely limited, and the time for consideration of the measure is super extremely tight.

That was the reason for my amendment to the Budget Act in 1985. In offering what is commonly called the "Byrd Rule"—I have noted that in the press it was referred to as the "so-called" Byrd Rule. I do not know what the press means by the "so-called" Byrd Rule. It is the Byrd Rule. My purpose was to curb this tendency to throw everything, including the kitchen sink, into reconciliation acts.

Now, the Byrd Rule has proved its efficacy. It might well be compared to Cerberus, which was—as referred to by Hesiod, the Greek epic poet, who lived in the 8th century B.C.—a hydra-headed dog that had three heads, according to Hesiod, and it guarded the entry into the infernal regions. That is what the Byrd Rule does. It may be termed a "hydra-headed" piece of work, but it guards the entry into the regions of legislation, the entry of extraneous matter—Cerberus. Since its adoption, the Byrd Rule has had some success—considerable success, I would say—in removing extraneous matter from reconciliation bills.

In this year's reconciliation bill, for example, the Democratic staff of the Budget Committee identified almost 250 provisions in the reconciliation bill, as reported by the Budget Committee which were, in their view, violations of the Byrd Rule. The list prepared by the Republican staff totaled almost 200 Byrd Rule violations. So it is obvious that Senators are going to continue to attempt to use the reconciliation bill as a vehicle to which they hope to attach their favorite legislative programs and provisions, whether such provisions are extraneous or not.

Mr. President, I have here at the desk—and I have already shown it once to the viewers—the Senate reconciliation bill, S. 1357. It consists of two volumes and a total of 1,949 pages.

Now, Senators received these two volumes—these 1,949 pages—on Wednesday of last week. They showed up on our desks on Wednesday. That was the same day that the 20-hour clock started ticking on this reconciliation bill. Debate is limited to 20 hours on the reconciliation bill. Can you imagine? Twenty hours on these two volumes, 1,949 pages!

The bills just appeared the same day. A motion to proceed to take up that bill was not debatable, and so when the motion was made, the bill was *ipso facto* immediately before the Senate, and the clock was running.

I would hope that the American people who are viewing what I am saying

here through that camera can put themselves into the shoes of those of us who are elected by those people to represent them in this great legislative Chamber.

People expect out there, expect us to know what we are doing. Passing the reconciliation bill was like playing blind man's bluff at a blind man's ball.

Imagine walking around here with a handkerchief around one's head and over one's eyes, voting blind. It cannot be aptly described in any lesser fashion. Not one Senator—not one—and there are some pretty bright Senators in this body, excepting myself—not one Senator really knew what he was voting on when he voted for that bill.

No committee held hearings on this bill. Several committees held some hearings on portions of it but no committee held hearings on the whole bill. There was no committee report, nothing by which we might be guided, except our own staffs. They were hit with the same problem at the same time.

Yet, we only had 20 hours on which to act on the bill. Everything counted against that 20 hours except, say, the reading of amendments, the time that was consumed on rollcalls, the time consumed on some quorum calls, and the time consumed by the Chair in response to parliamentary inquiries and so on.

That was an impossible—impossible—assignment. When the Senate completed action on its version, the 1,949 pages, it was only partly done with its work because the conference will now take place between the two Houses on the two differing versions of the reconciliation bill.

I now hold in my hand the House version. This is the House version of the reconciliation bill as passed by the House and sent to the Senate—two volumes, 1,839 pages. The House did its work, in less time. The House only had 6 hours!

That is beyond my imagination or comprehension, really, that a body of 435 persons could work its will in a knowledgeable, knowing, wise way in 6 hours on a bill consisting of 1,839 pages—that was 110 pages less than we saw on the Senate bill. That is the House bill.

Now, when the Senate completed its work, it ended up with a bill consisting of 1,862 pages—two volumes. So when the House and Senate conferees go to conference, this is what they have to contend with—these four volumes I hold in my hands. They are supposed to resolve the differences between the two Houses on the separate versions of the bill as passed by both Houses.

When the conference is completed, the conference report will come before the Senate under a time limitation of 10 hours—10 hours. We are going to get this thing back! We are going to get the conference report on this *Leviathan*. The conference report, we will have all of 10 hours to debate that.

There will surely be a number of brand-new items and provisions that

will be included in the conference report which have not yet been considered by the Senate. Yet, as I say, Senators will have only 10 hours to debate that conference report and amend it—if there is an opportunity to amend, if there are amendments in disagreement.

The 20-hour cap on reconciliation bill and 10-hour cap on conference reports to reconciliation bills is simply woefully inadequate for Senators to carefully examine these massive, nearly 2,000-page reconciliation bills and to offer and debate their amendments.

So that is why I offered an amendment during the debate on this reconciliation bill to extend the 20-hour cap to 50 hours on reconciliation bills and to extend the 10-hours to 20 hours on reconciliation conference report.

Do you know what happened? My amendment died on what was almost a party-line vote. One Republican, I believe, the able Senator from Vermont [Mr. JEFFORDS], voted to extend this time.

Mr. President, the lack of time allowed for Senate debate on reconciliation bills, means in fact that extremely narrow and often very unwise provisions can be easily hidden in these huge reconciliation packages. This year's bill for example appears to be very close to a repeat of Reaganomics. What do I mean by that? Massive tax cuts for the wealthy, together with a huge military build-up, paid for by devastation in public investments for transportation, education, and research, and by steep cuts in medicare.

During the campaign for the Republican nomination in 1980, candidate Bush had said that the Reagan revolution was based on "voo-doo" economics. And, we should not forget the warning of Majority Leader Howard Baker that the 1981 Reagan tax cut amounted to a "river boat gamble."

Mr. President, we lost that gamble.

The Nation is still paying the price for that "river boat gamble" in terms of the national debt and the interest on it that was run up during President Reagan's eight years. On the day that Mr. Reagan took office, the national debt stood at \$932 billion. It took the Nation 192 years and 38 different Presidents (39 different administrations) to reach a debt of \$932 billion. Yet, on January 20, 1989, the day that Mr. Reagan left office, the national debt was \$2.683 trillion.

Mr. President, how much is \$1 trillion? How long would it take to count \$1 trillion, at the rate of \$1 per second? Would it surprise you to know that it would take 32,000 years to count \$1 trillion at the rate of \$1 per second?

So, the national debt had mushroomed like the prophet's gourd, overnight, to \$2.683 trillion.

In other words, after the eight years of the Reagan Presidency, the budget was not balanced, as he had promised. Instead, the "river boat gamble" had left us with an 8-year string of record breaking deficits and a resulting increase in the national debt of \$1.751

trillion. Yet, we, supposedly intelligent men and women, have embraced that same failed economic theory all over again in this reconciliation bill that we just recently passed. Reaganomics was a disastrous policy and it is unbelievable that our learning curve is so flat.

I have been reading about the poor performance of American students in history, American history, and many other subjects, for that matter. I noted just a day or so ago in the newspapers—and I can believe some of what I read in them—that the performance of American students in American history classes is dismally poor—dismally poor. That is not to be compared with our own performance, which is much worse. It is unbelievable that our learning curve is so flat, so flat that in passing that reconciliation bill we would do it all over again. Do what all over again? Embrace the same failed economic policies that failed during the administration of Mr. Reagan. But that is exactly what has happened.

We have dusted off old, tired, discredited Reaganomics, rechristened it a "Contract With America" and slammed-dunked it into law through this crazy, crazy, convoluted process called Reconciliation. The so-called Contract With America.

Mr. President, among the 1,949 pages of that reconciliation bill, there appeared provisions calling for \$245 billion in tax cuts over the next 7 years—\$245 billion in reduced Federal revenues at the same time that we are trying to balance the budget.

I hear this blather in here practically every morning on the Senate floor by a few Senators who think the reconciliation bill was something akin to the Second Coming. We have reached the millennium, to hear them talk about it. They talk about how great this reconciliation bill was, how we have balanced the budget, and how we have lifted the burden off our children and grandchildren because we have balanced the budget with this reconciliation bill—they say.

Aristotle said of Callisthenes, "He is eloquent indeed, but he wants common sense."

So that is the way it is. We hear a great many eloquent speeches about what a tremendous step we have taken in lifting the burden off the backs of our children and grandchildren by passing this reconciliation bill. We will have balanced the budget in 7 years. But at the same time, out of the same mouths, we hear that we have also cut the taxes, cut taxes for the American people to the tune of \$245 billion. How can you do both? How can we possibly balance the budget on the one hand in 7 years, and on the other, hand out \$245 billion in tax cuts? It does not make sense!

I sometimes hear the Senate referred to as the Cave of the Winds—pretty aptly named. The world record for wind speed was 231 miles per hour, and it was recorded on April 12, 1934, the year in which I graduated from high school,

1934. That is the world's record for wind speed, 231 miles per hour. It was recorded on Mount Washington in the State of New Hampshire.

I know of no recording of the wind speed that we experience in this Chamber, but I daresay that climbers, who are on their way to the Himalayas and the Antarctic, would do very well to get some training in this Chamber because they would be acting under similar conditions as to wind speeds. To listen to these eloquent speeches about how much we have done for the American people and for our children and grandchildren in passing the monstrosity that no Senator—no Senator, none, not one—knows the alpha and the omega of what he did or she did in passing that legislation—is a joke, but not a funny one.

The perpetrators of this fiscal irresponsibility tell us that they can balance the budget and reduce taxes in 7 years. That is one of the mistakes that President Clinton also made in coming out for a tax cut. No, he was not going to cut the taxes \$245 billion, but he was still proposing to cut the taxes—\$63 billion over 5 years. That is folly! Folly, to think of cutting the taxes under these conditions—by gutting Medicare, by raising our Nation's domestic discretionary investments, and by spending so-called fiscal dividends, dividends that do not even exist, dividends that do not yet exist and may never exist.

We have seen the CBO err many times in the past in its projections as to future deficits. And over a period of 15 years—over a period of 15 years—it was in error on the average of \$45 billion annually. It was off in its estimates of the deficits on the average of \$45 billion a year. So we cannot believe, on the basis of CBO's projections, that the budget will be balanced in 7 years. And just one recession will knock those projections into a cocked hat. There will not be any dividend. But the tax cut will have been put in place.

Our Republican colleagues have found a way to claim that they have balanced the budget in 7 years, and provided a \$245 billion tax cut—at least on paper. In reality, Mr. President, we do not know what the next 7 years will bring. And we ought to admit that right up front to the American people. We do not know. Nobody knows what the interest rates will be, what the unemployment rate will be, what the rate of growth will be, what the inflation rate will be. Nobody knows. Only God knows. And there is nobody around here who can claim to be God.

We ought to admit that right up front to the American people. We certainly cannot know for sure—despite the imprimatur of the Congressional Budget Office—that a \$170 billion fiscal dividend will rise from the dust like the phoenix from the ashes, from the dust of this budgetary demolition. All we can be sure of is that, if this reconciliation bill ever becomes law, there will be a \$245 billion tax cut—right up front. You can hang your hat on that.

Not many people wear hats anymore. But if you have one, you can hang it on that. There will be a \$245 billion tax cut for the well-to-do. That is all we can say for sure right now in October 1995.

Mr. President, I cannot claim to know for certain the intentions of my colleagues on the other side of the aisle who promulgated this imprudent tax cut. But I can intuit what appear to be the roots of this fiscal irresponsibility. These roots were planted in the so-called "Contract With America." I did not sign on to it. I have never read it.

This is my contract with America. I carry it in my shirt pocket. It cost 19 cents when I bought it at the Government Printing Office several years ago. It is the Constitution of the United States of America. I swore to abide by that Constitution. That is my contract with America! And I have sworn to uphold that contract, to support and defend that contract with America—13 times upon entering into office over the past 49 years. That is my contract with America. I did not swear on to the impostor, the so-called "Contract With America." My people did not ask me to support the "Contract With America" when they elected me last year. I did not get any mandate to support the so-called "Contract With America."

The roots of the imprudent tax cut were planted in the so-called "Contract With America"—the legislative promissory note used by Members of the other body to ride the tide of voter hostility to power. In fact, many of the numerous tax breaks—such as the ever-popular \$500 child credit and the capital gains tax reduction—came directly from that document, I am told, because I have not read it. I have read in the newspapers that it was created by the political pollsters for politicians running for office.

I was a politician running for office last year. I did not read it.

Now those same politicians are Members of Congress, with a responsibility above and beyond political paybacks. Yet, they continue to adhere to the ill-conceived doctrine that tax cuts are more important than balancing the budget. You see, the so-called "Contract With America" contained the promise of a balanced budget amendment. My colleagues in the Senate had the courage to defeat that constitutional hoax. And I am proud of it.

I am not above amending the Constitution of the United States. Article 5 tells us how this Constitution, this contract with America, may be amended—in article V.

So my colleagues in the Senate had the courage to defeat that constitutional hoax called a constitutional amendment to balance the budget, and I am proud of it. It is unfortunate that Senators did not find that same backbone to prevent these reckless tax cuts at a time when we are running a substantial fiscal deficit with nearly \$4.9 trillion in public debt outstanding.

Let us all disabuse ourselves of the notion that tax cuts at this time are in

the best interests of the people of the United States of America. They are not. They are not in the best interests of the United States of America at this time.

It is easy to vote for tax cuts. In my 49 years in public office and in voting for tax cuts, I have found from time to time that it is an easy thing to do. It does not require any courage to vote to cut taxes. I do not believe that tax cuts at this time are in the best interests of the people of the United States.

They are fiscally irresponsible, akin to feeding chocolate to a diabetic, or like giving an alcoholic a case of bourbon for Christmas. We do the country no favor with this pandering. The voters will pay later with the toothaches of poor social and medical health services, declining public infrastructure, and the hangover of continuing huge budget deficits. And they are going to remember it.

The time will come when they will remember the advocates of this so-called "Contract With America." They will remember those who advocated the tax cuts. That worm is going to turn! The only question is when.

I am reminded of Croesus who was defeated by Cyrus the Great at the battle of Thymbra in 546 B.C. Cyrus the Great did not execute Croesus but, instead, he attached Croesus to his court as an adviser. Croesus was one of the richest men in the world, King of Lydia. But he was conquered by Cyrus. Cyrus sought to extend his dominions and to enlarge them. He had been very fortunate in numerous battles. And Cyrus sought to extend his dominions beyond the Caspian Sea.

According to Herodotus, Cyrus prepared to launch a war against the Massagetae, whose ruler was a queen, Queen Tomyris. Before Cyrus crossed the river into the dominions of the Scythians, he called his generals about him, his wise men, and asked them for their advice.

He finally asked Croesus for his opinion. Croesus said, "You have been very fortunate in adding land to land and dominion to dominion, and in winning many battles. There is a wheel on which the affairs of men revolve, and its movement forbids the same man to be always fortunate." Cyrus invaded and lost the battle. He had been warned by this queen not to invade. She had said, "Oh, Cyrus, you have been fortunate. You have added land to land, province to province, dominion to dominion, but don't invade my country. You control a vast empire. You don't need additional land. If you invade my country, I will give you your fill of blood."

There was a great battle and Cyrus was beaten. After the battle, she sent her men out on the field to look for Cyrus. He was dead. They brought Cyrus to her. She cut off his head. She had a bag of skin filled with human blood, and she thrust the head of Cyrus into that bag of blood, saying, "You wanted your fill of blood. I promised

you that I would give you your fill of human blood. I have kept my pledge!"

So the wheel turns, as Croesus said, and this wheel, too, is going to turn. And those who are crowing about this great Contract With America and how they have balanced the budget with this monstrosity and how they are giving the American people their money back, a tax cut to the tune of \$245 billion, how they are lifting the burden from the children's backs, they are going to eat those words. That is my guess. That is my opinion. The worm will turn. The wheel will turn.

I have stated time and time again on this floor that I am opposed to any tax cuts at this time—I was led down that parlous path more than a decade ago. But if we in this body are going to approve tax cuts, as we have at this time, I wish all Members had looked a little closer at exactly what was imbedded in this mammoth legislation. Mr. President, a close look at the individual components of the Republican-proposed tax cuts brings to light some striking revelations. We must pay careful attention to a Joint Committee on Taxation estimate that predicts that the tax "cut" provisions approved by the Senate Finance Committee will actually raise taxes for all taxpayers earning under \$30,000 in the year 2000, and that this tax "cut" will result in a tax increase for nearly half of all American taxpayers in that same year. We must comprehend that, according to the same estimate by the Joint Committee on Taxation, those taxpayers earning over \$200,000 in the year 2000 will receive an average tax break of \$1,500 that year. It is interesting, even that a large part of these so-called tax cuts would not help our most needy citizens at all, while those same Americans—seniors and low- and middle-income working families—will bear the brunt of this reconciliation bill's spending restraints—the classic double whammy.

Mr. President, this reconciliation bill is an abomination. It is a travesty. It is a bad joke.

We just rubber stamped what was sent to the Senate by the Budget Committee. It was forced under the law to send to the Senate what was given to it by other committees in carrying out their instructions from the Senate. We voted for it. I did not, but the Senate adopted it—just blindfolded itself. Put the blindfold on. Rubber stamped it.

It represents a serious breach of faith. We have played fast and loose with the livelihoods and the health care of the very people who sent us here. And I doubt, I just have to doubt that any Senator fully comprehends what was in this behemoth package.

Some may claim that they knew full well what was in this package when they voted for it, but they did not really know. They did not know. Yet, whole sections of the House bill that came over here, the first House bill that came over here had whole sections of it missing on the day that we began

the debate. We began the vote on this bill with no committee report, no explanatory statement to guide us and with only 20 hours to consider this mountain of paper—this bill and the House bill, one with 1,949 pages and the other with 1,839 pages. That weighs more than my little dog Billy.

The American people are angry, but as Mr. Reagan used to say, "You ain't seen nothing yet." Wait until they find out, wait until they understand the hoax that has been played on them by the passage of that monstrosity.

I know they are angry. Reportedly, they have had enough of ethics problems, enough of false promises, enough of Government meddling, and so on. They have every right to be mad, to use a colloquial expression, but I submit that they are mad about the wrong issues. They ought to be mad about what just happened on this floor last Friday, last Friday night past midnight when we passed that bill. They ought to be furious about the fast shuffle we just gave them on this Senate floor that night.

If the people fully understood the blatant disregard for any semblance of responsible legislating—that is not responsible legislating—the callous dismissal of any attempt to actually represent their views or to act in their best interests, they would be out in the streets looking for us! They would be ready to vote an amendment to the Constitution saying that Members of the House and Senate could be sent to death by a bill of attainder. A bill of attainder sends one to death without a trial. If the people really understood just what went on here, they would storm this city and dismantle this Chamber brick by brick by brick!

Yet, the supporters of this bill will gloriously claim that the revolution has come—long live the revolution! But, make no mistake about it, this is no grassroots revolution. It is, rather a revolution run by the elite. It has been accomplished by the politicians, behind closed doors, for the wealthy and the big contributors, and the important lobbyists. It is a revolution of the powerful by the powerful for the powerful. Tax breaks for football coaches—can you imagine that, tax breaks for football coaches—tax breaks for motorboat enthusiasts, special benefits for a Delaware Power and Light Company, special exemptions for newspaper companies, so that they won't have to pay unemployment or payroll taxes for certain employees, tax free conversion from trust funds to mutual funds, mineral rights give aways, large corporate farm loopholes which allow them to receive below-cost water, land sales for nuclear waste dumping, these were in the bill that came to the Senate floor. I do not know how many of them will remain in the bill—or remain in it now, as a matter of fact. I did not know what was in the bill when it passed. I voted against it. That was the best thing to do. If one does not know what is in a bill, he ought to vote against it.

Do no harm. These are hardly provisions which benefit the beans and bacon crowd.

No, no, this is strictly a caviar and champagne revolution! No ordinary commoners need apply.

And it gets worse when one focuses on the fact that what I have just listed represents only the tip of the iceberg. It is only the small amount of information on special tax breaks which I so far have been able to glean regarding the blue-ribbon character of this very select revolution.

So, the rich and the powerful and the oh so very comfortable will continue to sip their white wine and murmur ever so joyously about their exclusive little "gimme gravy" revolution. But, while this private tea party is going on in some circles, health care for the elderly has been slashed in order to foot the catering bill.

So, mark this down as a time when the so-called "world's greatest deliberative body," deliberated very little and produced nothing even close to "great." We tinkered around the edges with amendments, when all the while most of us had no real idea of what was buried in the underlying bill and were provided with little time or opportunity to inform ourselves or to inform the American people about these far-reaching changes.

This reconciliation process has been twisted out of all recognizable shape. It has become the antithesis of solid thorough legislating, and it makes a mockery of minority rights and the tradition of extended debate here in the Senate.

This Senator is fond of saying, "Est deo gratia pro Senatus!" "Thank God for the U.S. Senate." But, with regard to this sorry spectacle, I will have to alter my usual exclamation and say, "Thank God for the Presidential veto," not the line-item veto, but the veto which the President is given in the Constitution of the United States—the real contract with America.

Mr. President, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. THOMPSON). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, was leaders' time reserved?

THE PRESIDING OFFICER. Leaders' time has been reserved.

FAST-TRACK AUTHORITY

Mr. DOLE. Mr. President, Congress is now trying to put in place a plan that will reduce the tax burden on the American people, produce growth, create jobs, and put us on a responsible path to a balanced budget.

In the midst of this monumental undertaking, President Clinton would

like to get Congress to give him new fast-track trade negotiating authority. He wants to negotiate more trade agreements with more countries. In fact, he has already started negotiations for new trade agreements even without fast-track authority.

Mr. President, I believe it would be a mistake to extend new fast-track authority at this time.

There are a number of good reasons, but in my view first and most important is President Clinton's complete failure to explain to the American people why we need yet another trade agreement at this time. I believe the President's effort to get new fast-track authority has most Americans shaking their heads, wondering "Why does the President seem to want to rush into more free-trade agreements with as many countries, regions, or trading blocks as he can?"

Mr. President, the fact is we recently concluded two major trade agreements, GATT and NAFTA. I believe it only makes good common sense to step back a little and assess the results.

The ink is hardly dry on the largest trade agreement in history, the Uruguay round of the GATT, which came into force on January 1 of this year.

We do not really know what the impact of that agreement will be. We had many predictions last year, favorable and unfavorable, about the potential impact. But the agreement is unprecedented in its coverage, creating new rules for textiles, agriculture, services. It makes massive tariff cuts and lowers barriers worldwide. It establishes an entirely new and untested dispute settlement regime.

We need time to assess the impact of what amounts to the largest restructuring of our trading relationships ever.

No private entity, no corporation, no small business going through a fundamental restructuring would consider a new merger or acquisition in the middle of that process. Indeed it would be irresponsible. It could endanger the enterprise. So too for the United States as we implement the recent major restructuring of our trade relationships.

Instead of new trade agreements, let us proceed with a proposal I made last year to ensure that our sovereignty is not compromised by the new world trade organization. Although I believe the United States stands to gain overall from the GATT Agreement, many Americans remain unconvinced that the WTO will benefit them in the long run. Indeed, there is one important way the WTO could be harmful, and that is if the new dispute settlement system runs out of control. We must never submit to decisions by an unelected WTO bureaucracy if it oversteps its mandate and pursues its own agenda. My legislation, which I had hoped to have passed by now, and I hope we can pass in the near future, would set up a Dispute Settlement Review Commission that would allow us to withdraw from the WTO if our rights

are being trampled by bureaucrats in Geneva.

This is the kind of legislation we need right now. We need this legislation because it will help to protect American workers and American jobs. We need to have this protection in place as soon as possible before the first WTO decisions start to come. In fact the administration supports my legislation. And yet the administration has been silent on this issue. We have had no cooperation in trying to pass and enact into law a bill that everyone agrees is good for America, good for working Americans, and good for the multilateral trading system. It provides insurance against harm, it is an insurance policy for our sovereignty. What could be more important? Certainly not more trade agreements, because we are choking on new agreements right now.

It was just 21 months ago that we entered into another major trade agreement, the North American Free-Trade Agreement. The record for NAFTA is a work in progress. The verdict is not yet in. This is so for a number of reasons. The peso crisis is the most significant, but there has also been significant disappointment with the operation of that agreement, and with the level of cooperation we have experienced since it went into effect. The operation of the NAFTA dispute settlement mechanism for unfair trade cases has also raised serious concerns in Congress and in the private sector.

So we need time to assess the real results of NAFTA as well. I do not know how President Clinton explains to the American people that the provisions of NAFTA, good and bad, should be extended to other countries when we do not yet have a clear picture of how NAFTA has benefited working Americans. We need to know how this agreement has helped the American family.

Mr. President, I believe we need to step back from this unprecedented whirlwind of new trade agreements. We need a cooling-off period, a time to digest the results. We need to focus on our domestic house, on the actions we can take here at home that will improve our global competitiveness.

But for some reason, the administration seems to be in a great hurry to pile on not just one, but many more trade agreements as soon as possible from Latin America to Asia to Europe. President Clinton seems to be saying "Don't worry about it—I'll cut a new trade deal now and we'll figure out later if it was good for the American people."

I have no quarrel with any country that, as part of a program of overall economic reform, pursues a trade agreement with the United States. I admire and applaud countries that eliminate barriers to trade, that reform their economies, that improve the standard of living for their people, that attempt to open up to world trade, to reverse years and decades of ill-conceived, statist policies. Getting the